

## The Silent Partner

*Originally published in the October 1917  
edition of The International under the  
pseudonym of "Helen Woljeska."*

Since childhood she had been with me, disturbing my peace, mocking at content, filling me with wild restlessness, with strange longings.

I grew up. I knew love. . . . Did I know love? She shook her head derisively. She laughed at his reverential tenderness. She made mock of the sanctuary of our affection. It was then I rose up against her! I thrust her out of my life for ever. And, to be sure she never would return, I chained her with an iron will, deep, deep, into the darkest dungeon of my heart — so deep, so dark, that I never dared to look into it again.

The years passed. I lived a life of quiet, peaceful happiness — wifehood, motherhood — I quite forgot the silent partner who lay fettered and twisted, far from sunlight and life and love. . . . Perhaps she had died?

One magnificent autumn day, ablaze with gold and scarlet and lapis lazuli, the fullness of life suddenly thrilled me, overpowered me. . . . Oh! all that had gone before seemed so drab, so poor, so meaningless. I heard a call insistent, throbbing, irresistible. And I followed, intoxicated, delirious — I became queen in a universe of passionate glories.

And then, of a sudden, my silent partner stood before me — wan, tortured, perverted. She had broken her chains. She had arisen terribly. Flame-eyed and insatiable, she drove me from orgy to orgy. And in the fullness of my frenzy — she slew me.